

James H. ...  
1276

# The British Columbia Indian Land Question

---

from a

---

## Canadian Point of View

---



AN APPEAL TO  
THE PEOPLE OF  
:: CANADA ::

RECOMMENDED BY THE  
INDIAN AFFAIRS COMMIT-  
TEE OF THE SOCIAL SERVICE  
COUNCIL OF CANADA

LP  
R5012  
1914  
F89I

"We want justice to be done to us."—A  
Delegate of Nishga Tribe addressing the Govern-  
ment of British Columbia at Victoria, in 1887.





W 367

# The British Columbia Indian Land Question from a Canadian Point of View



## LORD DUFFERIN'S VIEW

*“ Now, we must all admit that the condition of the Indian question in British Columbia is not satisfactory. Most unfortunately, as I think, there has been an initial error, ever since Sir James Douglas quitted office, in the Government of British Columbia neglecting to recognize what is known as the Indian title.”*

**LORD DUFFERIN,**

*Governor General of Canada,  
at Victoria, September, 1876*



MEMBERS OF THE LAND COMMITTEE OF THE NISHGA TRIBE.

Photograph taken at Aiyansh, Naas River, upon occasion of a meeting of the Tribe held there in October, 1913.



## INTRODUCTORY.

In November, 1912, the "Friends of the Indians of British Columbia" presented to the Governor-General of Canada in Council a memorial, containing among other things an historical sketch extending to that time. The purpose of this pamphlet is that of sketching subsequent developments and stating the situation to which these have led.

## INTERVIEWS WITH CANADIAN MINISTERS.

*November, 1912, to March, 1913.*

In the course of an interview had with the Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs, on 5th November, 1912, Rev. Dr. Tucker, representing the Moral and Social Reform Council (now the Social Service Council) of Canada, stated the situation to be dealt with as follows:—

"The Indians of British Columbia, as the original inhabitants of the country, claim that they have certain rights in the land, and before the Government can sell or dispose of the land those claims should be considered. The Government of the Province, on the other hand, take the position that the Indians have no rights, and, though they have never given any reason for their position, they positively refuse to modify it. It is on this clear-cut issue that we present our case to-day.

"From the common-sense point of view it would seem to appeal to all unprejudiced and disinterested people that men who have inhabited a country from time immemorial and made their living there, must have certain rights which no newcomers should altogether overlook and override. Those rights should be extinguished in some equitable way by negotiation and compensation. Mere strength, or numbers, or superior intelligence, or even the interests of civilization cannot justify us in disregarding what may be looked upon as an inherent right."

On 27th November, 1912, the agreement which in September had been entered into by Mr. J. A. J. McKenna, Commissioner for the Government of Canada, and Premier McBride, relating to the Reserves, and not expressly dealing with the aboriginal claims of the Indians, was adopted by the Government of Canada.

On 28th November, 3rd December, and 5th December, there were had interviews with the Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs and the Minister of Justice, the result of which was, on 10th December, 1912, communicated by the Representative of the "Friends of the Indians," acting under authority received from the Superintendent-General

of Indian Affairs, to Mr. J. M. Clark, K.C., Counsel for the Indian Rights Association of British Columbia, for the information of the Indians upon occasion of a general meeting then about to be held, as follows:—

“On the 28th November Dr. Roche informed me that the Prime Minister the Minister of Justice and himself recognized the necessity of determining the rights of the Indians, and that the question by what method this should be done was being considered by the Minister of Justice.

“In interviews had by myself with Dr. Roche and the Minister of Justice on the 3rd inst., and interviews had by Canon Tucker and myself with the same Ministers on the 5th inst., these matters and in addition Mr. McKenna's report, together with attached agreement and the Order-in-Council of 27th November, of which I informed you, were discussed with some fulness.

“Having been assured that in passing the Order-in-Council the Government had no intention of prejudicing the rights of the Indians we ventured to suggest that in some way this fact should be expressly shown upon the face of these documents or otherwise. This suggestion the Ministers promised to consider and submit to the Council.”

In the course of the interviews above mentioned, the Minister of Justice stated that he could not recommend expending a large sum of money for securing a decision from the Judicial Committee until he had before him a more definite statement of the claims which the Indians are making.

As a result of the view then expressed by the Minister of Justice, the Nishga Indians assembled at Kincolith in January, 1913, and adopted a full statement and explanation of their claims, copies of which were sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Canadian Ministers.

In the course of that statement, they thus described their claims:—

“The claims which we make in respect of this territory are clear and simple. We lay claim to the rights of men. We claim to be the aboriginal inhabitants of this country and to have rights as such. We claim that our aboriginal rights have been guaranteed by Proclamation of King George Third, and recognized by Acts of the Parliament of Great Britain. We claim that holding under the words of that Proclamation a tribal ownership of the territory, we should be dealt with in accordance with its provisions, and that no part of our lands should be taken from us or in any way disposed of until the same has been purchased by the Crown.”

In the course of the same statement, they thus expressed their mind regarding the attitude of the Government of British Columbia:—



"In thus seeking to realize what is highest and best for our people, we have encountered a very serious difficulty in the attitude which has been assumed by the Government of British Columbia. That Government has neglected and refused to recognize our claims, and for many years has been selling over our heads large tracts of our lands. We claim that every such transaction entered into in respect of any part of these lands under the assumed authority of the Provincial Land Act has been entered into in violation of the Proclamation above mentioned. These transactions have been entered into notwithstanding our protests, oral and written, presented to the Government of British Columbia, surveyors employed by that Government, and intending purchasers."

In March, 1913, after preliminary interviews had with the Acting Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs (the Minister himself being absent on account of illness) and the Minister of Justice, the Representative of the "Friends of the Indians" had an interview with the Prime Minister of Canada and the Minister of Justice, the main result of which was soon afterwards stated in a memorandum prepared for the Minister of Justice, as follows:—

"In the course of an interview had on 27th March last with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice the last named Minister made a statement outlining the main points of the situation, by which in our judgment it was made perfectly clear that the only feasible method of securing a judicial determination of the rights of the Indians was that of bringing their claims directly before His Majesty's Privy Council."

## POLICY OF COUNCIL OF CANADA.

It being expected that the Government of Canada would soon take definite action in the direction indicated by the interview last mentioned, and the two Ministers named having expressed willingness to more fully discuss the subject with that end in view, the Indian Affairs Committee of the Council of Canada on 31st March arranged accordingly.

At the same time for the purpose of clearly setting forth the action from time to time taken by the Council of Canada, and the grounds of that action, there was prepared and placed in the hands of the Canadian Ministers a memorandum from which the following particulars are taken.

At the annual meeting of the Council, held on 23rd September, 1910, the following resolution was passed:—

"In view of the national importance of securing full justice for the native race in all parts of Canada, this Council, while not expressing an opinion upon the merits of the claims now being made by the Indian tribes of British Columbia, expresses its sympathy with the aims of the Conference of Friends of the Indians of British

Columbia in seeking to bring about as rapidly as possible a just and advantageous solution of the problem presented by existing conditions in that Province, and its sense of the great importance of accomplishing that object. This Council expresses the hope that the Governments concerned will facilitate a prompt and final settlement of the whole question of the Indian title."

At the annual meeting of the Council, held on 26th September, 1911, Rev. Canon Tucker, who had represented the Council in interviews held at Ottawa and in England, presented a report of which the following was the concluding paragraph:

"It was difficult to exaggerate the value of the help which has been given by the Council to the Friends of the Indians, in their delicate and supremely difficult work. As it seems likely that further representations will have to be made to the Governments of British Columbia and of Canada, and also the Imperial Government, it is of very great importance that the Indian Affairs Committee should be authorized to continue to co-operate with the Friends of the Indians, along the lines upon which they have acted in the past."

The following is an extract taken from the Minutes of the same annual meeting:—

"An informing address on the claims and complaints of the Indians of British Columbia, was made by Dr. Chown, and heard by the Council with much interest.

"He said that these Indians desired, and were entitled to have, their claims judicially decided, and that they felt keenly the fact that they were not allowed to become on fair conditions enfranchised citizens.

"A Special Committee on Indian Affairs, with full power, was appointed as follows: Canon Tucker, Convener; Drs. Chown, Copp, R. P. Mackay, Keirstead, Carman, and Messrs. Hamilton Cassels, and A. E. O'Meara, and the Secretaries, with power to add."

The following is an extract from the Report of the Executive Committee of the Council which was adopted at the annual meeting, held on 6th September, 1912:—

"The fact cannot be despised, however, that very serious constitutional difficulties stand in the way of an equitable settlement—difficulties that arise mainly from the attitude of the British Columbia Government which persistently refuses to admit that there is any question to be settled. Both the Dominion and Imperial Governments seem to be seized with the gravity of the situation, which justifies the hope that some means will be found of bringing the question to a satisfactory issue.

"Meanwhile, to strengthen their hands, it is all-important that the Moral and Social Reform Council of Canada should reaffirm its interest in the question and its solemn conviction that the time has now fully come when the claims of the scattered tribes of British Columbia Indians should at least receive a fair hearing and the



whole question permanently settled on a basis that will be generally satisfactory to all the interests concerned."

## INTERVIEW WITH MINISTER OF JUSTICE.

On 15th April, those representing the Council of Canada and the "Friends of the Indians," presented to the Minister of Justice the following "Reasons for Supporting Nishga Petition":—

1. For more than forty years the Indians of British Columbia have been making land claims which have been denied by the local Government.

2. This well-defined issue has always caused deep-rooted and widespread trouble, and has frequently threatened the peace of the Province.

3. In 1875, the Department of Justice of Canada, in a report adopted by the Governor-General in Council, declared that the claims of the Indians of British Columbia are well founded.

4. In 1876, Lord Dufferin, acting as Governor-General in pursuance of that declaration, met the Tsimpsean Indians at Metlakahtla and assured them that their rights would be protected.

5. For four years the Petition of the Indians of the Province, asking that their claims be submitted directly to His Majesty's Privy Council, has been before the Imperial Government and the two Canadian Governments.

6. In 1910, the Department of Justice reached the conclusion that existing conditions render necessary the judicial decision desired by the Indians which conclusion was adopted by the Governor-General in Council.

7. In the same year, acting in pursuance of that conclusion, both the Department of Indian Affairs and the then Prime Minister of Canada promised the Indians that their claims would be submitted to His Majesty's Privy Council.

8. In May, 1911, in the course of a report then sent the then Government of Canada communicated the conclusion reached and adopted as above stated to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and stated that it was proposed to institute proceedings in the Exchequer Court of Canada with a view to securing a decision.

9. In July, 1911, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, upon considering that report, forwarded to the Governor-General of Canada a despatch in pursuance of which the "Friends of the Indians" made to the Government of the Province proposals for settlement, which in April, 1912, were rejected.

10. In August, 1912, on account of constitutional difficulties encountered the Nishga tribe resolved independently and directly to submit to His Majesty's Privy Council a petition asking for a determination of their rights and the protection of His Majesty.

11. The Deputy Minister of Justice has advised that the rights of these Indians depend mainly upon deciding whether the Royal Proclamation of 1763 extends to the territory now known as British Columbia.

12. In our judgment it is not possible to secure a determination of the rights of the Indians by the method proposed in 1911, and by reason of failure to secure the consent of British Columbia it is not possible to obtain a satisfactory determination by means of referring questions to the Supreme Court of Canada. 17.5

13. Their Lordships of the Judicial Committee have in the Quebec case opened the way for submitting the aboriginal claims of the Indians of Canada.

14. The attitude of denial and refusal repeatedly assumed by the present Government of British Columbia is constantly agitating the minds of the Indians and increasing among them dissatisfaction and unrest.

Rev. Dr. Tucker then addressed the Minister as follows:—

I wish to say a few words to-day, not by way of giving information, as I have done on previous occasions, but as an earnest plea on behalf of speedy action, looking to the final and satisfactory settlement of this difficult question.

My first plea is drawn from the Indians themselves. For forty long years they have pleaded, and prayed, and waited for a settlement of their claims. And they have waited through all those trying years without committing any act of violence, though they have often been under severe provocation. And they have persisted in this peaceful course mainly because of their sublime, their invincible faith and trust in the British and Canadian Governments. It is pathetic, at times, to see them show a child-like confidence in British justice. And they are gradually being overwhelmed by the inrush of settlers through the policy of the Provincial Government. Action should be taken to do them justice before it is too late, before they are brought to see that they have pleaded, and prayed, and waited in vain.

My second plea is drawn from the Canadian Government itself. They are the guardians of the Indians and in the last resort any responsibility arising from the care of the Indians must be brought home to them. Forty years ago the Government took a strong stand on behalf of the Indians. The late



Government did the same; they instructed their agents to assure the Indians that their claims would be submitted to the Judicial Committee; and Sir Wilfrid Laurier gave them public assurance to the same effect. And he told a deputation, of which we were members, that courts existed for the settlement of just such differences as had arisen in British Columbia, that it was the part of good government to see that no portion of the population lay under a grievance, and that he would do all in his power to bring the question before the Judicial Committee. Forty years ago it would have been easy to settle the question. It is ten times harder now. It will be ten times harder still in ten years from this. There is no time to be lost in bringing the question to a final issue.

My third plea is drawn from the Moral and Social Reform Council of Canada, which I have the honor to represent here. They feel strongly that this troublesome, perhaps even dangerous, question should be settled without delay. Under the best advice given them they are convinced that it can only be finally and satisfactorily settled by a reference to the Judicial Committee. They recommend that, before the matter of the reserves be proceeded with, the more fundamental question of Indian title be disposed of. And they are in full accord with the view that the work of the recently appointed Commission should be only one of investigation and recommendation and that its findings should only become operative when sanctioned by the two Governments which it represents.

\* \* \* \* \*

And the present juncture is a favorable one for the final settlement of the question. The resolve of the Indians of Naas River to submit their claim directly to His Majesty's Privy Council affords an easy method of settlement; the Government of Canada need only assent to the reference. The agreement between the two Governments for the settlement of the reserves naturally brings up, if it does not necessarily compel, the settlement of the larger question. And the Moral and Social Reform Council of Canada consider that the moral issues involved are more important than the financial or political ones. The Prophets, three thousand years ago, under divine inspiration, taught that justice exalts a nation, and the experience of all nations since then has proved the truth of the prophetic utterance. In recent years it is the settlement of great moral questions, even at great national sacrifice, that has redounded to the highest honor of England and the United States. It is the just and

generous treatment of native and conquered races, that has, by the creation of a spirit of confidence and loyalty, proved the mainstay of the British Empire. The Canadian Government has been justly praised for its noble treatment of the Indians from the Atlantic to the Rocky Mountains. Why not extend that work beyond the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean? The Indians of British Columbia are among the most intelligent progressive and manly of the Indians of the Dominion. They are the Indians, if any, that are destined to survive. They will be the first to be drafted into the ranks of Canadian citizens. It may prove a serious blot on the national honor if we fail to carry out our pledges to them at this time. And it may prove to be one of the brightest gems in our national crown if we seize the opportunity of finally settling this question on a just and permanent basis.

Upon conclusion of Dr. Tucker's address, the matters involved were discussed at considerable length with the Minister, who at the close of the interview expressed the hope that the Government would at an early date reach a decision, which, he said, would be communicated. No such communication was received.

### THE NISHGA PETITION.

On 21st May last, the decision of the Nishga Tribe was carried into effect and a Petition of that Tribe was lodged in His Majesty's Privy Council. The developments which followed the lodging of that Petition will be shown by the documents set out below:—

### MEMORIAL OF NISHGA TRIBE.

At Victoria, on 19th September, 1913, delegates sent by the Nishga Tribe of Indians waited upon the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs, and presented the following Memorial:—

TO THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON INDIAN AFFAIRS:

GENTLEMEN:—

1. For more than a quarter of a century the Indians of British Columbia have been asking that their rights be judicially determined. (First request made by Metlakahtla Indians in 1886.)

2. In the year 1910 Canada through Sir Wilfrid Laurier and otherwise promised that our claims would be submitted to the Privy Council.



3. Ever since that time the Indians of the Province have been expecting that promise to be fulfilled.

4. During all that time the Government of British Columbia has been seeking to prevent such submission.

5. In the month of August, 1912, in view of the grave constitutional difficulties which had thus been encountered, the Nishga Tribe resolved independently and directly to place a petition before His Majesty's Privy Council.

6. On the 21st May last our Petition, copy of which is herewith laid before you, was lodged in the Privy Council.

7. Subsequently our London lawyers received from the Lord President of the Privy Council a letter relating to our Petition and referring to the alleged fact that "the whole matter raised by the Petition is at present under the consideration of a Royal Commission."

8. We are aware that His Majesty's Privy Council alone can finally determine our rights. We are also informed that in March last the Prime Minister of Canada stated that the Government of Canada did not intend to submit to the Commission the matter of determining our rights. For both these reasons we assume that the two Governments have not asked you to determine what our rights are.

9. At the same time we recognize that our Petition contains a number of statements of fact which might be considered and reported upon.

10. We, therefore, respectfully request you to state to what extent, if at all, you are prepared to consider and report upon the various matters contained in our Petition, and how soon you will be prepared to do so.

The above Memorial was unanimously adopted at a meeting of the Nishga Tribe of Indians, held at Kincolith on the twenty-fifth day of August, 1913.

W. J. LINCOLN,  
Chairman.

## ANSWER OF ROYAL COMMISSION.

In answer to that Memorial the Royal Commission informed the delegates that at Bella Coola and six other Indian centres, visited upon the trip which had just been completed, the assembled Indians had raised the matter which forms the subject of the Memorial, and that upon each such occasion the Commission had given the answer shown by the follow-

ing certified extract thereupon handed out by the Commission:—

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON INDIAN AFFAIRS FOR THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.**

Extract from stenographic report of meeting with Indians of the Bella Coola Tribe, held on the Bella Coola Indian Reserve, on the 18th day of August, 1913:

The Chairman (addressing the Indians):—

“The Commission has listened attentively to the document which Mr. Gibson has just read. That paper raises the question of what is known as ‘Indian Title.’ It is the first time that it has been definitely raised before us since we started on our work. I have to tell you that the Commission has not authority as to that. It is not within their jurisdiction. All we have to do is to settle the size of the Reserves, as I have stated before; so it is useless to raise the question of ‘Indian Title’ before us. We have simply to carry out the agreement between the two Governments. We are further authorized to make representations with respect to your conditions and your wants, and what may be called the ‘Future policy of governing you.’ That is all. The very Commission that appoints us assumes that the title to these lands is ‘In the Crown’ and not ‘In the Indians,’ and we cannot escape it.”

**WHAT IS THE RESULT?**

In this remarkable document the Commissioners have declared that the agreement between the two Governments, under which they are acting, assumes that the Indians of British Columbia have no aboriginal rights whatever in respect of the land of their forefathers.

**WHAT IS CANADA’S PREVIOUS RECORD?**

**The Department of Justice.**

In a report presented in January, 1875, the then Minister of Justice declared that the claim of these Indians was well founded and that they were entitled to an interest in the lands of British Columbia. In that report the Minister expressed the opinion that to treat these lands as the absolute property of the Province is “an assumption which completely ignores, as applicable to the Indians of British Columbia, the honor and good faith with which the Crown has in all other cases since its sovereignty of the territories in North America dealt with their various Indian tribes.”

**Lord Dufferin.**

In September, 1876, Lord Dufferin, then Governor-General



of Canada, in the course of an address delivered at Victoria, said :—

“Now, we must all admit that the condition of the Indian question in British Columbia is not satisfactory. Most unfortunately, as I think, there has been an initial error, ever since Sir James Douglas quitted office, in the Government of British Columbia neglecting to recognize what is known as the Indian title.”

### **Sir Wilfrid Laurier.**

On 26th April, 1911, the situation arising from the refusal of British Columbia to consent to a reference of the question of Indian title to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council was brought by the “Friends of the Indians” and the Moral and Social Reform Council of Canada before the then Government of Canada, when Sir Wilfrid Laurier, in the course of the answer given to the delegation, said :—

“The British Columbia Government contends that the Indians have no claim. If the case could be referred to the Supreme Court and the Privy Council it would bring the matter to an issue at once. Unfortunately, Mr. McBride would not agree to that submission. He only agreed to leave out of the question the very thing we want to have a decision upon. We do not know if we can force a Government into court. If we can find a way I may say we shall surely do so, because everybody will agree it is a matter of good government to have no one resting under a grievance. The Indians will continue to believe they have a grievance until it has been settled by the court that they have a claim or that they have no claim.”

### **HAS CANADA DEPARTED FROM THIS RECORD?**

According to the view of the Royal Commission, the present agreement is in fundamental conflict with the attitude of Canada previously taken with unvarying consistency for forty years, and is based upon the very assumption which was described by the Minister of Justice in the report of 1875.

### **WITH WHOM IS THE ISSUE?**

The answer of the Royal Commission is not in its application confined to the Bella Coola Indians and the Naas Indians, but extends to many other Tribes who are asserting and actively pressing the same claims. In fact the Indians

of the whole Province are a solid body in taking issue with the assumption so strongly disapproved by the Minister of Justice in 1875, upon which the Commissioners now say that their whole work is being carried on.

## RESOLUTION OF INDIAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, October, 1913.

On the 22nd October, 1913, the Indian Affairs Committee adopted a resolution in which, after referring to the action which from time to time had been taken by the Council of Canada, the representations made on 15th April, 1913, remaining unanswered, the Nishga Petition, and the developments which followed its presentation, the Committee proceeded as follows:—

"We therefore declare that in our judgment, apart from all reasons previously urged, the declaration of the Commission above mentioned renders it imperatively necessary that at the earliest possible date there be secured from the highest Tribunal of the Empire a judgment determining the rights of these Indians upon the basis of which every outstanding question between the Indians and the two Governments may be equitably and finally decided.

"We, therefore, earnestly appeal to the Government of Canada in every way possible to help the Nishga Tribe to secure an early reference of the Petition to the Judicial Committee, and to take action to that end at once.

"We also appoint Rev. Canon L. Norman Tucker, D.C.L., Rev. R. P. Mackay, D.D., and Rev. T. Albert Moore, D.D., to present this resolution to the Government of Canada."

## OCTOBER INTERVIEW.

On 29th October, 1913, the resolution above mentioned was presented to the Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs and Hon. Geo. E. Foster, representing the Government of Canada, when these Ministers expressed the hope that the Government would soon reach a decision.

## FURTHER ACTION DEFERRED.

In the absence of any such decision, those representing the Council of Canada and the "Friends of the Indians" conferred in London with the Agents of the Nishga Tribe, when it was decided to defer taking further steps in the Privy Council until another effort had been made to secure a decision at Ottawa.

## OPINION OF MINISTER OF JUSTICE.

On 7th January, 1914, the Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs handed to the Representative of the "Friends of



the Indians," a copy of the opinion regarding the Nishga Petition, which at his request had been given by the Minister of Justice. In that opinion the Minister, while conceding that the claim of the Indians has sufficient foundation to justify consideration by the Courts, deals with the subject of the policy of the Government of Canada as follows:—

"I may remind you that it was the declared policy of our predecessors in office to submit to the Courts for decision the question of the aboriginal title which is the subject of this Petition and has been for some years agitated in British Columbia. \* \* \* \*

"The agreement of 24th September, 1912, between representatives of the Dominion and British Columbia, which was approved by Order-in-Council of 27th November following, appears to evince a departure from the policy of the late Government. It is recited in the preamble that it is desirable to settle all differences between the Governments of the Dominion and the Province respecting Indian lands and Indian affairs generally in British Columbia, and upon this recital the stipulations or proposals of the agreement are said to be agreed upon as a final adjustment of all matters relating to Indian affairs in the Province. The agreement, while it provides for the ascertainment of the various Indian reserves and the disposal thereof or confirmation of the titles in the manner therein provided, makes no reference to the aboriginal title, and it may be considered that it would be incompatible with the intention of the agreement that the Dominion should maintain cause of the Indians in respect of the aboriginal title, seeing that this title is ignored by the agreement and that the proposals or stipulations of the agreement are declared to have been agreed upon as a final adjustment of all matters relating to Indian affairs in the Province. I think, therefore, that the policy of the Government in relation to the matter is a preliminary question to be determined." \* \* \* \*

## RESOLUTIONS OF INDIAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE.

January, 1914.

At a meeting held on 23rd January, 1914, at which were reported the interviews held since the previous meeting and the opinion of the Minister of Justice, the Committee adopted the following resolutions:—

### RESOLUTION No. 1.

Whereas in our judgment the present position of Indian affairs in British Columbia, which has arisen from the persistent refusal of the Government of that Province to recognize the aboriginal claims of its native Tribes, is exceedingly grave, not only involving the whole future of the twenty-five thousand Indians, but also affecting the honor and threatening the peace of our country,

And whereas for upwards of forty years the settled policy of Canada has favoured the judicial determination of the claims of the Indians and at times has gone to the length of endorsing those claims,

And whereas recent events have clearly revealed the possibility that, notwithstanding assurances received by the Indians and the "Friends of the Indians," from the Prime Minister of Canada and other Canadian Ministers, the present Government of Canada will reverse that policy and even refuse to help the Indians in securing a hearing before the Judicial Committee of His Majesty's Privy Council, which for years they have sought, thus leaving them in a position of great difficulty,

We therefore recommend that, with the object of making the situation fully known to the people of Canada, there be immediately published and widely distributed a pamphlet containing the material documents and other necessary information,

And we resolve to join the "Friends of the Indians" in seeking to have an interview with the full Canadian Cabinet as soon as it may be practicable to arrange for such interview.

#### RESOLUTION No. 2.

In pursuance of the repeatedly declared policy of the Social Service Council of Canada, we earnestly commend to all Canadians who value the well-being of the native races of our Dominion and the honor of their country the supremely difficult task undertaken by the "Friends of the Indians," and express the hope that throughout Canada all possible help will be given to them in carrying that task to a successful issue.

#### WHAT WE MAY REASONABLY EXPECT.

From all that has been set forth above, it is not unreasonable to conclude that the sense of justice of the people of Canada will fully support the Government in taking effective steps to bring this long-standing question to a final and satisfactory issue, and when the true nature of the question involved has become more generally known, will even demand the taking of such steps.

PUBLISHED BY  
THE CONFERENCE OF FRIENDS OF THE INDIANS OF BRITISH  
COLUMBIA.

31ST JANUARY, 1914.





